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PUDUKKOTTAI STATE

NATIONAL WAR FRONT BUREAU

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LECTURE CLVII.

EXIT MUSSOLINI.

SURRENDER OR RUIN—THE CHOICE BEFORE ITALY.

Mr. Churchill's Warning to the New Government.

The House will have heard with satisfaction of the downfall of one of the principal criminals in this desolating war. The end of Mussolini's long and severe reign over the Italian people undoubtedly marks the close of an epoch in the life of Italy.

The keystone of the Fascist arch has crumbled and, without attempting to prophesy, it does not seem unlikely that the entire Fascist edifice will fall to the ground in ruins, if it has not already so fallen.

PEOPLE'S DEFENCE.

The totalitarian system of a single party, armed with secret police, engrossing to itself practically all offices, even the humblest, in Government and with Magistrates and Courts under control of the Executive, with its whole network of domestic spies and neighbourly informants—such a system when applied over a long period of time leaves the broad masses without any influence on their country's destinies and without any independent figures, apart from the official classes. That I think is the defence for the people of Italy—one defence, although there can be no really valid defence for any people which allows its freedom and inherent rights to pass out of its own hands.

Now that the external shock of war has broken the spell which in Italy held all those masses for so long, in fact for more than 20 years, and held them for all this period in physical and even more in moral subjection, we may, reasonably expect that very great changes will take place in Italy. What their form will be or how they will impinge upon the forces of German occupation and control it is too early to forecast.

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COST ITALIANS DEAR.

The guilt and folly of Mussolini have cost the Italian people dear. It looked so safe and easy in May, 1940 to stab a falling France in the back, and advance to appropriate the Mediterranean interests, and possessions of what Mussolini no doubt sincerely believed was a decadent and ruined Britain. It looked so safe and easy to fall upon the much smaller state of Greece. Events have taken a different course. By many hazardous turns of fortune, and by long marches of destiny the British and United States armies—having occupied the Italian African Empire, North Africa and the great bulk of Sicily—now stand at the portals of the Italian mainland, armed with the powers of the sea and the air and very large and amphibious forces equipped with every modern weapon and device.

What is it these masterful forces bring to Italy? They bring, if the Italian people so decide, relief from war, freedom from servitude, and, after an interval, a respectable place in the new and rescued Europe. When I learned of the scenes enacted in the streets of the fine city of Palermo on the entry of the United States armies, and received the mass of detailed information with which I have been furnished, I cannot doubt that the main wish of the Italian people is to be quit of the German taskmaster, to be spared a further and perfectly futile ordeal of destruction and to revive the former, democratic and parliamentary institutions. These they can have. The choice is in their hands.

THE ALTERNATIVE.

And what is the alternative? The Germans naturally desire that Italy shall become a battleground, the preliminary battleground, and that by Italian sufferings the ravages of war shall be kept as far away as possible, and for as long as possible from the German fatherland.

If the Italian Government, and people, choose that the Germans are to have their way, no choice is left open to us. We shall continue to make war upon Italy from every quarter (cheers)—north and south, and from the sea, and from the air, and by amphibious descents we shall also endeavour to bring the utmost rigours of war increasingly upon them. Orders to this effect have been given to all the Allied commanders concerned (*cheers*).

A decision by the Italian Government and people to continue under the German yoke will not affect seriously the general course of the war, still less will it alter its ultimate results.

The only consequence will be that in the next few months Italy will be seared and scarred and blackened from one end to the other. I know little or nothing of the new Government. I express no opinion upon it, but it is obvious that, so far as their own people are concerned, they have a very important decision to take.

Meanwhile I am anxious that the various processes by which this decision is reached shall be allowed to run their course under no other pressure than that of relentless war (*cheers*).

This operation may well take some time. There may be several stages of transition. Past experience shows that in cases of a great change of heart, and character of the Government of a nation, very often one stage is rapidly succeeded by another. I cannot tell. So far we have had no approaches from the Italian Government, and, therefore, no new decision is called for from us, except those decisions connected with bringing the maximum avalanche of fire and steel upon all targets of military significance throughout the length and breadth of Italy (*cheers*).

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However, I must utter a word of caution. We do not know what is going to happen in Italy and, now that Mussolini has gone, and once the Fascist power is certainly and irretrievably broken, we should be foolish to deprive ourselves of any means of coming to general conclusions with the Italian nation.

POSITION TO BE AVOIDED.

It would be a grave mistake, when Italian affairs are in this flexible, fluid and formative condition, for the rescuing powers of Britain and the United States so to act as to break down the whole structure, and expression of the Italian State. We certainly do not seek to reduce Italian life to a condition of chaos and anarchy and find ourselves without any authorities with whom to deal. By so doing we should lay upon our armies, and upon our war effort, the burdern of occupying, mile by mile, the entire country and of forcing the individual surrender of every army or coherent force in every district, into which our troops might enter. An immense task of garrisoning, policing and administering would be thrown upon us, involving grievous expenditure of power and still more of time. We must be careful not to get ourselves into the kind of position into which the Germans have blundered in so many countries, namely of having to hold down, and administer in detail day by day, by the system of Gauleiters, the entire life of a very large population, and thereby becoming responsible under the hard conditions of this present period for the whole of their upkeep and well-being. Such a course might well in practice, turn the sense of liberation which it may soon be in our power to bestow upon the Italian people into sullen discontent against us and all our works. I certainly do not wish, in the case of Italy, to tread a path that might lead to execution squads, and concentration camps; and above all to have to carry on our shoulders a lot of people who ought to be made to carry themselves.

TO STEW IN THEIR OWN JUICE.

Therefore, my advice to the House of Commons and the British nation, and to the Commonwealth, and the Empire, and to our Allies at this juncture may be simply stated. We should let the Italians, to use a homely phrase, 'stew in their own juice' for a bit and hot up the fire to accelerate the process until we obtain from their Government or whoever possesses the necessary authority, all the indispensable requirements we demand for carrying on the war against our prime and capital foe which is not Italy, but Germany.

It is in the interests of Italy, and also the interests of the Allies that the unconditional surrender of Italy should be brought about wholesale and not piecemeal (*cheers*).

Whether this can be accomplished or not, I cannot tell, but people in this country, and elsewhere, who cannot have the necessary knowledge of all the forces at work, or assign true values to the various facts and factors, should, I think, at this juncture be restrained in speech and writing, so that they may not add to the tasks, toils, and losses of our armies, and prolong, and darken the miseries which have descended upon the world.

What is Italy as a war unit? Italy is, or rather it was, perhaps about one-tenth of the power of Germany. German tyranny is being violently assulted and beset on every side.

Mighty ba[illegible] on the Russian Front, far exceeding in scale any of the operations in which we and the United States have hitherto been engaged on land, have, in the month of July, inflicted very deep [illegible] on the German Army.

The systematic shattering of German cities continues remorselessly and with ever-growing weight (*cheers*). The spirit of revolt rises higher in all subjugated lands.

German rule is maintained from North Cape in Norway to the island of Crete only by hideous and ruthless cruelty, reprisals and massacres.

German hopes of the U-Boat warfare turning the tide of the war are sinking as fast as the U-boats themselves (*laughter and cheers*).

The whole outlook of the Nazi party, and régime, their whole ideological outlook as it is called (*laughter*), **will be disturbed, and darkened by the events which have happened, and are going to happen in Italy, and the overthrow and casting down in shame and ruin of the first of the dictators and aggressor war lords strikes the knell of the impending doom of those that remain.**

IMMENSITY OF TASK AHEAD.

Nevertheless, let us not allow this favourable inclination of our fortunes to blind us to the immensity of the task before us, or of the exertions still to be made, and privations and tribulations still to be endured, and overcome.

The German national strength is still massive. The German armies, though seriously mauled by three Russian campaigns, are still intact, and quite unbroken. Hitler has under his orders over 300 German divisions, excluding satellites. Three quarters of them are mobile and most of them continue to be well-equipped.

We are fighting some of these divisions in Sicily at this moment, and, as we see, they offer stubborn resistance in positions well-adapted to defence. The authority of the Central Government of Germany grips and pervades every form of German life.

The resources of a dozen lands are in their hands for exploitation. Harvest prospects are reported to be fairly good.

This Nazi war machine is a hateful incubus upon Europe which we are resolved utterly to destroy, and the affairs of Italy must be handed with that supreme object constantly in view.

Both our strategy and our policy, I venture to claim, have been vindicated by events, and I look forward to offering to Parliament, as the months unfold, further convincing proofs of this assertion.

But we cannot afford to make any large mistake which we can, by careful forethought, avoid, nor can we afford to prolong by any avoidable mismanagement the sombre journey in which we shall persevere to the end. (*loud cheer*).

NAZI OFFENSIVE LIQUIDATED.

Stalin's Order of the Day, July 24.

Yesterday, on July 23, by successful operations, our troops completed the liquidation of the German July offensive striking from the region south of Orel, and north of Byelgorod, in the direction of Kursk. From the morning of July 7, the Germans with large forces of tanks and infantry, supported by big formations of aircraft, attacked in the Orel-Kursk and Byelgorod-Kursk directions. The German Command threw into the batt[illegible] in the Orel-Kursk direction seven tank, two motorised and 11 infantry divisions [illegible] the Byelgorod-Kursk direction, 10 tank, one motorised, and seven infa[illegible] Thus, in all, 17 tank, 3 motorised, and 18 German infantry divisions [illegible] offensive.

Concentrating these forces in narrow sectors of the front, the German Command expected, by concentrated blows from the north and south, and in the general direction of Kursk, to break through our defences and to surround and annihilate our troops in the Kursk salient.

This new German offensive did not find our troops unprepared. They were prepared not only to repel any German offensive. but also to inflict powerful counter-blows.

ENEMY THROWN BACK.

At the cost of heavy losses in personnel and equipment, the enemy wedged into our positions to a depth of about nine kilometres (5½ miles) in the Orel-Kursk direction and 15 to 35 kilometres (9½ to 22 miles) in the Byelgorod-Kursk direction. In fierce battles our troops wore down and bled white crack German divisions, and by subsequent determined counter-attacks, not only threw the enemy back and fully restored the positions held by them up to July 5, but broke through the enemy's defences, and advanced in the direction of Orel from 15 to 25 kilometres (9½ to 15½ miles).

Battles for the liquidation of the German offensive displayed the high fighting qualities of our troops, unprecedented examples of stubbornness and the steadfastness and heroism ofmen and officers of all arms, including gunners and trench mortar crews, tankmen and airmen.

Thus the German plan of a summer offensive must be considered as having completely failed. This has exposed the legend that the Germans are always successful in summer offensives, while Soviet troops are allegedly forced to retreat in the same period of the year.

In battles between July 5, and July 23 the enemy sustained the following losses: Over 70,000 officers and men in killed and 2,900 tanks, 115 self-propelled guns. 844 field guns, 1,392 aircraft, and over 5,000 lorries disabled or destroyed.

WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY.

24—7—43 to 30—7—43.

Sicily.—Since the surrender of PALERMO, the capital (reported last week) MARSALA, TRAPANI, TERMINA, VETRANO and CEFALO on the E-coast have fallen in rapid succession. The Axis is now penned in a triangle, with its apex on MESSINA and its base on CEFALO in the east and CATANIA, on the west. In the western sector, the American advance is steady. In the centre the Canadians, are making 'limited progress'. South of CATANIA, in the western sector, artillery duels are the main feature. The enemy is blowing up dumps and other supplies in the Catanian air-fields, presumably as a preliminary to evacuation.

Harbours, and rail and road communications in N. SICILY are being blown up. Offensive sweeps are being carried out uninterruptedly in an arc from SARDINIA, CORSICA and ELBA, across Central and Southern ITALY to the Ionian sea and GREECE.

A largescale air offensive was also carried out on enemy forces and installations in CRETE and hits were scored on factories at IERAPETRA and HERACLION.

[illegible] The German summer offensive of the year has been liquidated. Between [illegible] the enemy lost: 70,000 men in killed; 2,900 tanks, 115 self-propelled [illegible] 2 aircraft, and 5,000 lorries.

With the fall of MTSENSK, reported last week, and the fall of BOLKHOV which happened this week the German position at OREL has deteriorated. Eight Soviet armies are now converging on OREL and only one sector has to close. In pouring rain the Russians are battering their way ahead, along 2 highways, 3 railways, and 3 river valleys, fighting numerous small engagements and several major battles. The storm centre, at present, is a 25-mile sector below BOLKHOV between the Oka and the Nugr.

Air-War.—The fiercest raid of the week fell on HAMBURG, the centre of the submarine building industry in GERMANY. It has a port area of some 10,000 acres, with 22 miles of quays for sea-going ships, and 10 miles of docks and landing-stages. It had 5 raids in 48 hours. In the raid on the night of July 24, which lasted 50 minutes, 2,300 tons of bombs were dropped. The ground defences were swamped and scattered. 'Streets were covered with piles of glass splinters, pitted with bomb craters and blocked with burning beams from houses'. Reeperbahn, its main throughfare, no longer exists.

Other targets were HEROYA and TRONDJHEM in NORWAY; COURTRAI in BELGIUM and WORNSDRECH in HOLLAND.

The Pacific.—U. S. ground forces are within 2,100 yards of the MUNDA airfield. On July 26, Allied bombers delivered one of the heaviest attacks of the war on MUNDA, 200 aircraft dropping 186 tons of bombs. Most of the Japanese artillery has been knocked out.

The American forces which landed in Nassau Bay have advanced up to Tambu Bay. All Japanese attacks in the Namlu area on the Komiatum trail, S. W. of Mt. Tambu have been repulsed.

On July 22, a surprise raid was carried out on SOURABAYA, the Japanese main base in the NETHERLANDS INDIES. Direct hits were scored on oil refineries, warehouses and docks.

On the same day a Japanese sea-plane tender of 9,000 tons was sunk off BOUGAINVILLE, while attempting to run supplies and equipment to BUIN.

On July 24 WAKE ISLAND had an attack, in which 9 Zero fighters were destroyed, 4 probably destroyed and 5 others were damaged, out of 30 machines which tried to intercept the attackers.

On July 25, 10 attacks were carried out on Japanese installations on KISKA. The main camp in NORTH HEAD and Little KISKA were also strafed.

China.—U. S. fighters destroyed 2 Japanese steamers, one large barge and 3 locomotives on the Yangtse near YOYANG.

In FUKIEN Province, Chinese forces raided HUANGKUN Island and destroyed shipping and harbour facilities in the vicinity of HAIPHONG, HONGAY, TENGCHUNG and CHANGANCHEN.

On the 24th, a hundred Japanese bombers attempted a raid on two American advance bases in KWANGSI and HUNAN and were forced to jettison their bombs before they could reach their targets. The enemy's losses were 10 Zeros and 6 bombers destroyed, 12 Zeros and 3 bombers probably destroyed, and 6 Zeros and three bombers, damaged.

A new Japanese drive from YANGCHENG, on the Yellow river i[illegible] south, in the direction of SIYELI is reported.

Burma.—In the course of patrol activity in the ARAKAN, a small force of British troops, a few days ago, engaged a larger enemy force near MAUNGDAW and inflicted heavy casualties. In spite of appalling weather due to the monsoon, the Allied air raids continue. The targets attacked during the week were:—ALON, SEBAW, SAGANG, TAUNGUP, AKYAB, NAMTU MINES, KATHA, SUMPRABUM, MOGAUNG, MONAHKANG, LAZA, SEDAN, NSOPZUP, Hunter's Bay, KALEMYO, PAUKTAW, PAGODA point—SAGAING, SUMTA and HPUNGINZUP.

ALLIED AIR RAIDS.

19—7—43. (Monday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

Day:—

Offensive sweeps over Northern FRANCE.
Axis shipping off the DUTCH coast.

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

ROME (Capital of ITALY).
The Decimomannu air-field in SARDINIA.
The communications centre of RANDAZZO (Sicily).
Road and rail communications in ITALY.
The air-fields at VIBO VALENTIA (Italy), and AQUINO (Italy).

RUSSIA.

(117 Axis planes shot down).
Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

Enemy positions in the BAIROKO area (N. Georgia).
The sea plane base at REKATA BAY (Santa Isabel Island).
The air-fields at KAHILI and BALLALE (Bougainville).
The dispersal area at FINSCHHAFEN (N. Guinea).
A bridge near SALAMAUA (N. Guinea).
Enemy base at MACASSAR (Celebes).
Shuoli bridge near the YUNNAN border.
SUMPRABUM (Burma).
Supply dumps at KAWNAN and KADRANGYANG (Burma).
The road bridge at NSOPZUP.
Enemy transportations and troop positions in the ARAKAN (Burma).
Sampans and rivercraft on the CHINDWIN and IRRAWADDY (Burma).
RATHEDAUNG and MINBYA (Burma).

20—7—43 (Tuesday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—

Offensive patrols over BELGIUM.

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Communications centre of RANDAZZO (Sicily).
Road and rail commnnications in SICILY.
Air-field at CROTONE (Italy).
Railway communications in NAPLES (Italy).
The air-field at GROSSETTO.
Patrols over Allied shipping (4 Axis planes shot down; 2 Allied planes missing).

RUSSIA

The railway jnnctions of OREL LOZOVAYA and KRAMSKAYA.
Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

...ea at KOEPANG (Timor).
...M (Timor).
...(Dutch New Guinea).
Enemy occupied LOGUL village (New Guinea).
Air-fields at KOMIATUM and ALEXIS CHHAFEN, (New Guinea).
Enemy dumps at MADANG (New Guinea).
The air-fields at KAHILI and BALLALE (Bougainville).
MUNDA (New Georgia).
Enemy naval units in VELLA GULF (Solomons). (1 cruiser and 2 destroyers sunk).
The railway bridge at MYITNGE (Burma).
MU River Railway bridge (Burma).
River craft on the IRRAWADDY (Burma).
Railway wagons at ALAGAPPA (Bnrma).
Enemy positions at KYAUKPYU, TAUNGUP and KALEMYO (Burma).
AKYAB (Burma).
SUMPRABUM (Burma).
The Rice mill at MOGAUNG (Burma).
Supply dumps at MANAHKANG, LAZA and SEDAN (all in Burma).

21—7—43 (Wednesday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

No information about day and night Allied air activity.

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Road and rail communications in SICILY and South ITALY.
Patrols over Allied shipping.

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

KISKA (Aleutians).
Jap positions in the BAIROKO harbour area (New Georgia).
Air-fields at MADANG and FINSCHAFEN (New Guinea).
Jap barges at LAE (New Guinea).
The air-fields at RABAUL and CAPE GLOUCESTER (New Britain) and PENFOEI (Timor).
KAUKENAU (Dutch New Guinea).
Nautumines near LASHIO (Burma).
River boats near KATHA (Burma).
The rail road bridge at NAMTI (Burma).
SUMPRABUM (Burma).
The bridge at NSOPZUP (Burma).

22—7—43. (Thursday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—

Reconnaissance over Northern FRANCE.

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Railway communications at FOGGIA, BATTAPAGLIA and SALERNO (all in Italy).
The air-field at CAPODICHINO (Italy).
Enemy communications in SARDINIA.
Air-fields at PRATICALA DI MARE, AQUINO and CROTONE (Italy).
Shipping off the north coast of SICILY.

RUSSIA.

(112 Axis aircraft destroyed).

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap naval base at SOURABAYA (Java).
Jap held villages on SELARU Island,
MUNDA (N. Georgia).
3 Jap warships in the Bougainville Straits.
5 Jap bridges near SIO (N. Guinea).
The isthmus at SALAMAUA (N. Guinea).
FUNAFUTI (Ellice Island).
Jap positions at KISKA (Aleutians).
River craft between PROME and ZIBYUBIN (Burma).
Supply Sampans in HUNTER'S BAY (Burma).
Enemy villages in the KALEMYO area (Burma).
PAUKTAW (Burma).

23—7—43 (Friday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

NIGHT :—
Laying mines in enemy coastal waters.

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Road communications in SICILY.
Barges off the north coast of SICILY.
The airfield at REGGIO DI CALABRIA.

RUSSIA.

(43 Axis planes destroyed).

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the RUSSIAN Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap gun positions in New GEORGIA.
MUNDA (N. Georgia).
4 Jap barges in VILLA GULF.
A village in TIMOR.
The air-field at CAPE GLOUCESTER.
Rooke Island (VITIAZ STRAIT).
HUON GULF.
BOGADIDIM and SAIDOK (all in N. Guinea).
The wharf area at FINSCHHAFEN (N. Guinea).
LAE and SALAMAUA (N. Guinea).
Enemy river and coastal craft in the AKYAB area (Burma).
BUTHIDAUNG (Burma).
Enemy forces and the installations on CRETE.

24—7—43 (Saturday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—
Aluminium plant at HAROYA (Norway).
Repair works at TRONDJHEM (Norway).

NIGHT :—
The submarine base at HAMBURG (Germany).

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Railway yards at BOLOGNE (Italy).
Targets at MARAINADI CATANZARO and MARINA DI PAOLA (Italy).
The ferry terminus at SAN GIOVANNI (Italy).
The Italian port of LEGHORN.
The port of MILAZZO (Sicily).
Communications in SICILY.
Shipping and barges off the north coast of SICILY.

RUSSIA. (56 Axis aircrafts shot down).

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

Jap positions on the WAKE Island (Mid Pacific).
The airfield at FUILORO (Timor).
ALUTEM (Timor).
Ammunition dumps at DILI (Timor).
The sea plane base at TABERFAINE (Aroe Islands).
Enemy barges off New BRITAIN.
The airfield at **LAE** (New Guinea).
The Bairoko harbour area (New Georgia).
SUMPRABUM (Burma).
Landing grounds south-west of RANGOON.
AKYAB (Burma).
Sampans along the IRRAWADDY.

25—7—43 (Sunday).

EUROPE (German occupied).

DAY:—
The Naval base at KIEL (GERMANY).
The submarine base at HAMBURG (Germany).
Aircraft factories at ROSTOCK.
The sea-plane base at WUSTROW.
Aircraft factory at AMSTERDAM (Holland).
Air-fields at WOENSDRECHT (Holland) and COURTRAI (Belgium).

NIGHT :—
Steel works in ESSEN (Germany).
Targets at COLOGNE and HAMBURG (Germany).

ITALY and the MEDITERRANEAN.

Air combats over MESSINA (26 axis planes shot down).
Ry. communications at MARINADIPACLA.
The port of MILAZZO.
Enemy ship in the TYRRHENNIAN SEA.

RUSSIA.

Air combats and grounded aircraft all along the Russian Front.

FAR EAST.

The airfield at MUNDA.
A Jap ship off BUKA (Solomons).
BOUGAINVILLE (7 Jap planes shot down).
Jap positions at KISKA and little KISKA (Aleutians).
Japanese supply centre at KYAUKTAW (Burma).
Offensine patrols along the IRRAWADDY and off the ARAKAN coast (Burma)-
Marshalling yards at SAGAING near MANDALAY (Burma).
The enemy base at MOGAUNG (Burma).
The road bridge at TIANGUP (Burma).
Jap H. Q. at SUMTA (Burma).
Barracks 80 miles north of KATHA (Burma).

ENEMY AIR RAIDS.

20—7—43 (Tuesday).

BRITAIN.

No enemy air activity.

RUSSIA.

No enemy air activity

FAR EAST.

RENDOVA (Solomons).

21—7—43 (Wednesday).

BRITAIN and RUSSIA.

No information available.

FAR EAST.

BENA—BENA area (New Guinea).

22—7—43 (Thursday).

BRITAIN.

No air activity.

RUSSIA.

Reconnaissance over the Soviet rear.

FAR EAST.

BULOLO (New Guinea).

23—7—43 (Friday).

BRITAIN.

No information available.

RUSSIA.

Air combats over OREL (94 Axis planes shot down).

FAR EAST.

RENDOVA (Solomons).

24—7—43 (Saturday).

[illegible]

No enemy air [illegible]

RUSSIA.
Air combats over OREL.
FAR EAST.
RENDOVA Island.
25—7—43 (Sunday).
BRITAIN.
No information available.
RUSSIA.
No enemy air activity.
FAR EAST.
BENA—BENA area (New Guinea).

26—7—43 (Monday).
BRITAIN.
Two places in East ANGLIA; **THAMES ESTUARY** (1 Axis aircraft destroyed).
RUSSIA.
Air combats over OREL (57 German planes shot down).
FAR EAST.
RENDOVA Island (8 enemy planes shot down; 4 Allied planes missing).

SIDE LIGHTS.

EXIT MUSSOLINI. Mussolini has 'resigned'—His dictatorship of 21 years has collapsed. Politically dead, he now passes into oblivion unwept and unhonoured, with a nation's, and the world's, curse following him; because, he has betrayed his nation's honour, lost her an empire and destroyed the peace of the world. Treachery has been his policy, as his felonious blows on ALBANIA, FRANCE and GREECE show. Cruelty has been his practice, as LIBYA and ABYSSINIA remember too well. We are glad this demagogue-tyrant has gone into the obscurity he deserved; he has gone the way of transgressors. Avaunt! Harlequin Cæsar.

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CRIMINAL AND LUNATIC. According to a recent report Mussolini was arrested while trying to escape and is now kept a prisoner in his own house. According to another account he has become a lunatic, subject to long attacks of hysteria and once he starts laughing he does not easily cease. It is as it should be. The mad house is a fitting resting place for this most wicked man of our times. But we are in doubt if he would be allowed to rest in Bedlam. If he is not lynched by his own countrymen his trial by the United Nations may follow, as, next to Hitler he is the arch war criminal and international gangster.

For a long time now, Mussolini's influence had begun to wane: the disillusionment of the Italian nation had set in. Early this year, in a desperate attempt, Mussolini seized all the reins of Government in his hands appointing himself as his Foreign Minister. He purged his party and appointed a new secretary-Carlo Scorza; but nothing could stop the rot. He withdrew Italian forces from the Russian front in a last hour attempt to meet the popular will. Then followed the greatest Italian defeat in N. AFRICA. Still he hoped to feed his people with false hopes. AFRICA may go, he said but SICILY remained—a stone-wall, which would defy any Allied invasion and, when the Allied forces not only invaded but advanced rapidly in SICILY, when ROME was bombed, he met Hitler 'somewhere' in ITALY but negotiations broke down, presumably either because Hitler could not send forces to ITALY or Mussolini could no longer defend it himself. The débacle followed.

By an order of King Victor Emmanuel Mussolini has been succeeded by Badoglio.

From Sunday when Mussolini was dismissed the ROME Radio ceased to announce the year by the Fascist era and substituted the Italian National Anthem for the Fascist hymn. All Fascist insignia have been removed throughout ITALY. The Fascist militia has been incorporated with the Italian army. The Fascist party has been dissolved by an order of Badoglio's Council.

Mussolini's deposition is the beginning of the end of the Axis. The Axis originated in the personal relations of Hitler and Mussolini.

The Ex-Dictator's exit will also affect the course of the war though it is not easy yet to make definite forecasts. Mayor La Guardia thinks that ITALY will capitulate in a few days. A more cautious view is that of a WASHINGTON Military Observer, quoted by *Reuter*.

"Everything that has happened in ITALY suggests a radical overturn. I doubt whether the King would take over just to continue Mussolini's policies, or rally the nation for energetic defence. This is the first step towards ITALY's getting out of the war. There are not many German troops in ITALY to-day. If the Italians want to make peace, I think they can do so, despite GERMANY, particularly with Mussolini out of the way and Fascist influence weakened".

But the situation is still too obscure to guess. In their published messages, King Emmanuel talks of 'battle stations', and Badoglio of the continuance of the war. The German armies still remain in ITALY though the supply-dumps are being burnt at CATANIA, a preliminary to evacuation. The Sicilian battle continues, perhaps as a token of ITALY's 'faith in her given word.'

But the Allied duty is clear as Mr. Churchill has announced. The Fascist régime and Armed Forces must surrender unconditionally. Mussolini has been overthrown but the Germans still remain in ITALY. The work of neither the Allied Forces nor of the Italian people will be complete 'until the last German has either been killed, captured or expelled and the Italian Government have accepted the Allied demand of honourable capitulation'. If the advice is not heeded, ITALY will be blasted and scorched and forced to surrender.

The Allied advice has been tendered in no uncertain terms. May the Gods grant ITALY the wisdom to choose right, before the storm which is blowing over SICILY spreads to the mainland. ITALY is hallowed by history and religion. She was once the seat of the mightiest empire before the British; she is the cradle of European Civilisation and the seat of the Roman Church.

Last week we reported the fall of PALERMO, the capital and the political, cultural and business centre, of SICILY. It was a shameful surrender. Not one of the Black Shirts who had been told off to defend it resisted and their Italian officers left the place in a high speed motor-boat even before the attack started.

The fall of PALERMO has been followed by the capture of MARSALA, TERMINA and VETRANO along the west-coast; the total of prisoners taken is 79,000.

The Germans are cornered on the northern banks of the River Dittaino in the CATANIA plain, with a front extending from the sea to the Tyrrhenian sea. The Allies have broadened their bridgeheads and carry on a bitter fight round CATANIA and it is a losing battle for the enemy. MESSINA, his only way of escape has been closed by the Royal Navy, while the American forces have cut the N. coastal railway and are marching on MESSINA. The Canadians are storming the Etna defences.

The Allied air-raids on the mainland and the approaches to ITALY extend along a perimeter of 600 miles from CORSICA and ELBA, across Central Southern ITALY and the Ionian Sea, to the W. coast of GREECE. PREVZA, AQUINO, COTRONE, MILAZZO and LEVELAND have been blasted.

FACT AND FICTION. There is much ado in the Axis camp over the recent bombing of ROME. Enemy broadcasts scream and shout in a frantic attempt to represent the bombing as an attack on culture and religion. The Allies are well aware of the glory that was ROME and hold the Vatican in veneration. But ROME is really in 3 parts—the Vatican, the industrial centre and the railway junction. ROME is not only an ecclesiastical city, but a military, arms-manufacturing and communications centre. Through it pass all the supplies of SICILY. The bombing of ROME was thus a military necessity. The raid was carefully confined to the marshalling yards at Littoria. Even the enemy does not point to any destruction except some damage to the Basilica of Sal Lorenzo. In Rome there are 400 churches. It lies ill in the mouth of the enemy who has to date destroyed 13,895 Allied Churches, convents and other ecclesiastical edifices, to complain. ROME might have been declared an open city if the enemy was honestly intent on saving it.

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TWILIGHT AND SUNSET. Mussolini's day has set; for Hitler it is twilight deepening into gloom. On the day of bombing Mussolini was not in ROME but had gone to a town in N. ITALY to meet Hitler. It was a secret meeting. The days of pompous, ceremonial meetings of the two dictators at the Brenner Pass were now over; as well as the proud days when Hitler summoned Mussolini to Berchtesgaden. Hitler came south, and Mussolini went north, as one suppliant to meet another. There was however no help to give or to take. They examined the situation 'objectively'—a situation 'admitting of no illusions'; and parted, Mussolini to resign his dictatorship and Hitler to resume his desperate commandership of the Eastern front. The last meeting of the dictators was a prelude to the fall of TUNIS; this may well be a prelude to the fall of ITALY.

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GOING N. S. W & E. Hitler's future is dark and dismal. Reports say that, shocked by the news of the downfall of his confederate, he has flown back to BERLIN which is said 'to bear all the outward marks of a crisis.' And Hitler may have to travel much more, and in every direction—to the capitals of occupied and satellite EUROPE to beg, to cajole and to solicit. He may have to go to SOFIA and BUCHAREST, to PRAGUE, BUDAPEST, and VIENNA; SICILY has done it.

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'FREE GERMANY'. A National Committee called, 'Free GERMANY' consisting of German nationals has been set up in MOSCOW. It includes German prisoners of War, Deputies of the Reichstag and members of Trade Unions. It issues a newspaper of its own in German and leaflets which have a wide circulation inside GERMANY. It has also published a manifesto which declares, 'Hitler is leading GERMANY to destruction. The day of GERMANY's collapse is approaching. Nobody will make peace with Hitler. The setting up of a National German Government is therefore a task which cannot be postponed. This Government, which can only be formed as a result of the war of liberation of the German people, will immediately stop military operations, withdraw troops to the German frontier and enter into peace negotiations.'

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OCCUPIED EUROPE: YUGOSLAVIA. Rommel has proceeded to GREECE. Big riots have broken out in SOFIA and the military have been called in. Strong reinforcements have been rushed to MACEDONIA

CO-OPERATION AND WAR. Not the least of the opportunities for development, open to INDIA under the stress of the war is the widening scope it has given to Co-Operative organisations. Now has come the chance for Co-Operative Societies, already doing successful work, to pass from mere banking to the problems of production, distribution, and consumption, which, judged from European and American antecedents, are their more appropriate concerns. 'Co-operative marketing,' says the Marketing Advisor to the Government of INDIA, 'deserves increased attention to give the producer a larger share of the price paid by the consumer.' The Societies, far from giving up their present credit side, will enlarge their work, so that producers will borrow and the consumers will buy, from the Society. The Societies will own shops if necessary or go downs, in the centres of production and sale. Producers may borrow in cash or kind and buyers pay in cash or raw materials required by the producer. These Societies again may be linked, if necessary, with price control. In UPPER INDIA Societies exist linking sugarcane producers with the pan-factories. In AFRICA, the Societies mill the members' wheat. The lines of expansion are many. But a word of caution is necessary, these adventures, for adventures they will be till they succeed, should not be undertaken by any but the best Societies, and with the most reliable staff. Trade and Production are extremely difficult jobs, requiring no less training, caution and care than Banking. But the reward if successful will be a new economic life for the country, and a controlling of prices and commodities in these difficult times.

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WAR WORK IN PUDUKKOTTAI. The PUDUKKOTTAI Government have alloted a sum of Rs. 300 a year for giving a reward not exceeding Rs. 10 ordinarily to any person who gives reliable information of hoarding or profiteering in foodstuffs. The reward may be exceeded in special cases. The Superintendent of Police has been authorised to give the rewards not exceeding Rs. 10 himself.

INDIAN STATES LABOUR UNITS.

ADDRESS DELIVERED IN THE TOWN HALL, PUDUKKOTTAI ON 24—7—43.

by

Mr. Walker, Chief Liaison Officer, Indian States Labour Units.

AN APPRECIATION.

In the first place, let me express my great appreciation of the war efforts Pudukkottai has been making during the past four years. I have had some connection with labour matters. Propaganda and war effort have always been points in which the planters are interested. They have been discussing how best to carry on both. Pudukkottai State has definitely shown how it can be done. The excellent Bulletin issued by the National War Front Bureau, Pudukkottai, is having a wide circulation among all the estates of South India.

THE LABOUR UNITS.

I shall now explain what the Indian States Labour Units are. In January 1942, when Japanese aggression was at its height, a great many defence works were required

in India and labour for these defence works was urgently needed. The Quarter-Master-General, G. H. Q. conceived the idea of asking the Viceroy to consult the Chamber of Princes which was then holding a meeting at Delhi, to ascertain whether Indian States would assist in recruiting large numbers of labourers. The Princes agreed. The result was that the Indian States Labour Units came into being, and States from various parts of India contributed their quota. The most successful units came from South India. Cochin and Travancore have been recognised as having produced the best type of men. These States were asked to send a great many more units to Assam. The pressure for labour has reached a peak-point. A very small State like Cochin, (bigger no doubt than the Pudukkottai State,) has contributed no less than 50 units of 850 men each, during the past 15 months; and has sent 8 units to Ceylon. Travancore has now sent 6 units and will be sending 4 more.

THEIR COMPOSITION.

Let me deal with the composition of these labour units. There are 800 labourers in a unit, under the command of an army captain who has always hitherto been a South Indian planter. Second in command there is a Senior State Officer. Under him there are Supervisors, and a Quarter-Master. The unit is divided into gangs of 25 labourers, each under a gang leader. Each unit has its own cooks, policemen, a hospital, a medical officer, a compounder and four nursing orderlies. Each is a complete organisation in itself and can be moved as one complete unit, wherever necessary.

HEALTH AND WELFARE.

The welfare side of the unit is looked after by myself with a staff of assistants from the States. Indian officers are working with me, and there are besides, what are known as Transportation clerks situated at four centres, viz., Calcutta, Manipur and two other places. In addition to these transportation clerks there are interpreters chosen from the several States. These interpreters work in the Military Hospitals and learn all about the needs of the labourers and communicate them to the Military Doctors. The interpreters speak Malayalam, Tamil or Hindustani. I have ample powers to employ as many of these interpreters as I consider necessary, and I do not hesitate to make use of their services.

When a cooly falls sick and goes into hospital he is given what is known as an Identification Certificate, which is carefully filled up according to the instructions on the back. He also wears a brass disc attached to a brass chain, giving the name of his State, his unit number, gang number and personal number and he is never allowed to take it off till he returns to his native place, so that any officer can see in a moment to what unit he belongs.

Those who are sick and unfit for further work are sent back by special ambulance to Calcutta, where they are detained in hospital. During their stay there they are paid a rupee a day, and a rupee a day right up to the time when they report again for duty to the Recruiting Officer. They are also given free rations while in hospital.

The labourers are supplied with clothing when they come to Assam. They are given, khaki bush-shirts, long-shirts and anti-malarial cream. Their huts are sprayed with flit and they are also provided with mosquito nets. The huts are provided with cocoanut matting. The water supplied is good; if there is no pipe water wells are dug. Hygiene is good. Labourers are trained in Indian hygiene. A special hygiene section looks after this. Each unit is given Rs. 100 monthly by the army department for the purchase of

what they require for recreation. Some go in for football, or volley ball, and others use the money otherwise.

FOOD AND PAY.

The pay of the labourer is a rupee a day and for working late after his usual task is finished, which is generelly about 5½ hours, he earns more. Free rations, as I said, are provided by the army. These rations are the same as are given to the fighting sepoys. They are known as Indian Troop Rations and they are excellent. For the Indian State labourers we supply boiled rice and tamarind, and the Malayali gets cocoanut oil. It has been represented to me that Pudukkottai labourers would like gingelly oil. I will see that they get it when I go back. Labourers are also supplied with fresh vegetables, potatoes, meat (three times a week), dhal, curry stuffs and fruit (oranges or pineapples). If fresh fruits cannot be got they are given tinned fruit. If the unit desires any change in the diet, it is made; for instance, North Indians like garlic, while South Indians don't.

NO FEAR OF MALARIA.

There is a complaint that Assam is malarious. On the banks of the Brahmaputra and in the tea gardens, extensive anti-malarial work has been carried out and malaria practically does not exist there. Last year, in the jungle areas where our troops had to go, there was a certain amount of man-made malaria. During the last 8 months anti-malarial work has been carried on and this year there is no malaria. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. If you watch the Cochin labourers who come back to their homes and see how healthy they are and how willing they are to go back to their gangs, you will understand how well they are looked after. The Army officers take a keen interest in the Indian labour and look after their welfare.

MATTERS POSTAL.

As regards correspondence with labourers, stamps must be affixed to letters addressed to units in Assam. The labourers have the privilege of sending unstamped letters on which the Supervisor certifies; 'No stamps available, unstamped; On active service, Letters addressed to members of the unit should be addressed:—'*Pudukkottai State, Unit No. 1. c/o No. 6, Defence Base P. O.*'

SAVINGS.

Apart from the contribution that they make to the war effort, there is an advantage accruing to the State from these units. Part of the money that is earned by the labourers is sent to the State every month. As much as possible of the labourers' wages is remitted by money order. The amount that now reaches Cochin State from Assam every month is 4 lakhs of rupees, and Pudukkottai will also get every rupee that can be sent from Assam.

WORK.

Regarding the work of these labourers I may state that they are making a very vital contribution to the war effort—a contribution of real and first-class importance. The supply of Labour in Assam is insufficient and a tremendous amount of work is turned out by these labourers in building aerodromes and constructing roads and in other ways.

AMENITIES.

A suggestion was made to me that the labourers' spare hours might be employed in teaching them to read and write Tamil. I shall take up the suggestion. These units have among their officers men who can read and write Tamil, and they can spend half-an-hour a day in teaching the labourers.

Each unit is allowed to have a Stage and there are often dramatic competitions between the units. The drama is written by somebody in the unit itself. Places of worship are also provided. The army authorities have allotted funds for building their temples.

LABOUR AND AIR-WAR.

We have been working since April last year. The Units then went up to Calcutta and its neighbourhood and did war-work there when the Japanese bombed Calcutta. The men have not been exposed to bombs except in one or two cases, and there have been no casualties. But the Army authorities have recorded their high appreciation of the way in which the South Indian labourers stood up to the bombing when it did occur. They resumed work at once after the Japanese planes had cleared off. I know of a Cochin lorry driver. When all other drivers had left and the Japanese came, he stuck to his post and carried on his work, and this was favourably commented upon. All the units are now in Assam where they are working, except the 8 units who have gone to Ceylon.

A HOPE AND AN APPEAL.

I hope to send copies of my monthly reports to the Administrator, Pudukkottai State, keeping him in touch with the progress made by Pudukkottai labourers. I am quite sure that the report will be favourable. The Army authorities have been looking forward hopefully to this unit from Pudukkottai. From what I have seen in Pudukkottai in regard to the war effort and the enthusiasm displayed, I am led to hope that the unit now sent up will come right to the front and achieve fame for the State from which they come.

Large numbers of labourers are required and more and more ought to come. I hope Pudukkottai State will see its way to contribute more units. Pudukkottai is a small State and it has made a very big contribution towards war effort; but still the quickest way to relieve the shortage of food is to recapture Burma. Labourers in the Indian States Labour Units are doing their best in the battle for Burma. The gang has been fighting hard in Assam for the past 8 months. A very vital reason for recapture of Burma is to ease the food situation in India.

THE ATTACK ON THE OCTOPUS.

By Liberator.

"Victory is a name not strong enough for such a scene," said Nelson after his victory of the Nile. And once again a Battle of the Nile has been concluded amidst scenes which defy description. The military triumphs of the Allied arms are great; so is the import of the way in which the final collapse of African armies of the Axis was achieved. The almost joyful abandon with which German troops surrendered is very different from the attitude of the grim unbending Herrenvolk who scorned death and pity alike in their victorious campaigns.

Nelson's victory of the Nile was won at Aboukir in the river mouth. Ours was won on the Medjerda River 2,000 miles from the Nile. This contrast is more than a curiosity. It reveals one of the basic conditions of warfare in 1943. The Maginot defences were barely three miles deep and accordingly condemned. Defensive works had to be thirty and even fifty miles deep to halt a Panzer assault. So we were told in 1940. The Russian defence was deemed adequate. It had depth greater than any in Western Europe. It held—but only after the German advance had penetrated five, six, and seven hundred miles. Then, when the tide turned in Russia, General Dietmar gloated "Space has defeated the Russian winter offensive. Germany has now enough space to make the fullest use of elastic defence."

EVASIVE BATTLE.

What was this elastic defence? It is more than a propaganda phrase. It is a modern reincarnation of the seventeenth and eighteenth century form of evasive battle; of compelling an enemy to exhaust himself and extend his communications to the point of danger, while the defending army remains in being almost in the sense in which a battle fleet remains in being even at the cost of refusing battle.

We are face to face now not only with the Axis defence of Europe but equally with this strategic conception behind it all. We are now taking the initiative in the attack on the *Fortress Europa*, but for the moment our assault strategy is still responding to the shape of the defence. This may change at any moment. Broadly, Allied strategy is aiming at lopping the tentacles of the Nazi octopus before decisively assaulting the body. Sicily, Italy, Balkans before Germany looks like the order of the Allied scheme of strategic priority. The overcoming of the enemy space is left to the American and our Bomber Forces, and a great deal will depend on the effectiveness of our present bombing offensive. The Lancasters and Fortresses are carrying a heavy stake in Allied strategy. But no single weapon has ever won a war on its own. Neither the tank, the plane, nor the ship.

It was the combination of the victory of El Alamein, the landings in North-West Africa, and the Russian counter-offensive in November which laid the basis for the Axis disaster in Africa. The logic of events is forcing a unity upon the conduct of the war which as yet is not reflected in the machinery of the Allied nations. The inter-Allied conferences in Casablanca and Washington and the permanent committees in Washington are a step in the right direction.

The Nazi pattern of war then is evasion in defence, space as security and possibly cautious attack, probably on the Russian front, as re-insurance. The *Luftwaffe* with its restricted numbers now seeks to conserve itself for defensive needs. It no longer indulges in that pet conception of German militarism to engage the ememy and destroy him at the cost of abandoning the strategic objective. But though the *Luftwaffe* now suffers an overall inferiority on all its fronts—as described by the Air Correspondent—it has not lost its ability and capacity for rapid concentration for the purpose of gaining temporary local superiority, as it did in Russia last autumn and as it did for a while in Tunisia early this year.

The battle in the air, however, is not one of geographic positions alone. The one type of Allied warfare which hitherto has defied the limitations of evasion and space is the Allied bomber offensive. Industry is largely immobile. Space in the air bears little relation to space on the ground, and it is therefore not surprising to see the Wehrmacht concentrating on the production of fighters with which to overcome this threat against which no amount of land space in Europe is sufficient insurance.

The Air Council's policy in the use of aircraft in battle has undergone drastic and welcome change in the course of the past year or so. The creation of tactical and strategic air forces now, which are in effect close-support, and long distance air forces brings the R. A. F. more in line with military and naval needs without reducing its value as an independent striking force when conditions favour it. It is, however, anomalous to have this strongly integrated air force accepted in Africa but not yet in the European theatre of war. For here we need it more than ever to contend with the enemy conception of the fortress of Europe. It is based now on the German conception of space in Europe.

THE TENTACLES.

It includes the Ukraine and the marshlands of the East, the Norwegian bulwark in the North, the Balkan and Italian outposts in the South and South-East and nonbelligerent Spain as a neutral cover of the flank in the South-West. All these countries are, to vary the metaphor, the tentacles of the octopus. The body lies ensconced behind the defences of the Atlantic and West Wall, behind the Alps and the Carpathians, and behind the defence of the German armies in the East and the West and the U-boats at sea.

The Germans cannot afford to give ground in the Baltic region of the Russian front and in the Low Countries in the North. Everywhere else they are adapting themselves to the elastic defence which can afford to give some ground and which can use the abandonment of ground to gain compensating advantages. In Southern Europe they have over sixty Italian Divisions to call upon to defend their homeland against invasion. That is a million men who may take the first brunt of the Allied air and land assault.

It is sometimes suggested that these desperate men, bankrupt monarchies, abandoned satellites, and political opportunists, might be induced to abandon their masters in Berlin and take our side, as did Admiral Darlan last year. Surely the Allies have made it clear to their own people and to those who bowed not their knees to the conquerors in Europe that such an abandonment of the cause for which we went to war would be too great a price to pay for what would be at its best a partial and inconclusive victory.

Tunis and Bizerta stand in striking contrast to the squabbles and disheartening which accompanied the deals in French Africa. Here the Allies showed strength and determination, and to them the Axis armies surrendered, and the people came over to our side without remorse and quarrel. It is the only language that is understood in a war which is not waged for gain but for existence. We may be apt to forget this in this pleasant hour of success.

NO PARDON.

But the German Nazis and their hangers on will not forget. They know that no man on earth can pardon them in the eyes of their misled and betrayed peoples. That whatever mercies they may gain by new treacheries and double-crossing they will not escape their fate once they are no longer masters.

SUCCESS OF R. A. F.'S MASTER PLAN

AIR USED AS AN ALLY OF THE SEA

The R. A. F.'s present successes are due not only to the fact that Britain pioneered a new conception of air power as an aid to economic blockade but equally to the accurate and meticulous preparation since 1939. Having conceived the aerial compaign against the structure of German war production and invented planes with sufficient bombing power to cause permanent damage, the next question was clearly the choice of targets yielding the highest returns. It was known that in basic raw materials and manpower German resources were already so strained that in 1939 men worked on an average 49·6 hours a week, and the naval blockade would add to the labour strain by diverting over 1,000,000 workers to extra food production alone while the R. A. F. diverted a further 2,000,000 to anti-aircraft defences, fulltime civil defence and rebuilding—hence labour shortage would impose still greater stress throughout the German war machine. Direct air attacks might turn the stress into rupture at three keypoints: arms production facilities, transport and civilian production.

ARMS PRODUCTION.

Germany's inherent weakness was the fact that two-thirds of her hard coal, coke, pig iron and steel was concentrated in 600 square miles of the Ruhr, on which the German army depended for 50 per cent of its entire equipment. Moreover, the Ruhr concentration was closest to the R. A. F. bases, so that large bombloads could be carried. There was also the fact that German war industry could not be dispersed from the Ruhr. For these reasons the R. A. F. pioneers in 1939 selected the Ruhr as the main target for the British bomber offensive.

But the R. A. F. Command also knew that the British naval blockade, by cutting off vital raw material supplies, would impose further strain on the German arms output Plans were therefore made for the R. A. F. to exploit these additional weaknesses.

For example, the Navy cut off 80 per cent of Germany's pre-war oil imports. Therefore the R. A. F. planned to bring the shortage to a head by attacking oil stocks and refineries. Again, the Navy cut off 35 per cent of Germany's pre-war molybdenum supplies, making her almost entirely dependent for irreplaceable steel-hardening metal on the Knaben mines in Norway. A single R. A. F. attack on March 3, 1943, robbed Germany of these supplies for 10 months. By cutting off all raw material imports, the Navy forced Germany to divert 35 per cent of her entire electric power supply to the synthetic plants. The R. A. F. planned to narrow the resulting bottleneck even further by attacking the power plants.

ATTACK ON TRANSPORT.

Germany's two inherent weaknesses in 1939 were the shortage of locomotives and waggons and the fact that her production capacity was concentrated in eight factories. The R. A. F. planned to bring this shortage to crisis proportions by attacking locomotive factories and trains, but the programme was postponed owing to other demands until August, 1942. At the same time R. A. F. fighters launched their train-busting offensive.

But the R. A. F. Command also knew that the naval blockade, by drastically reducing German sea and road transport (the latter by blocking oil) would throw a tremendous additional strain on railways, which carried 76 per cent more freight in 1941 than in 1938. Therefore additional plans were made in 1939 for the R. A. F. to increase this strain to breaking point with attacks on marshalling yards and communication centres. This plan was implemented in 1940 with 130 attacks on Hamm, Soest and Schwerte, while attacks on communication centres were launched in June, 1941, with attacks on Aachen, Muenster and Cologne.

CIVILIAN PRODUCTION.

One of Germany's weaknesses was that production for civilian consumption had been reduced to the barest minimum and there was no source from which bombed-out production could be replaced except war production. Hence the R. A. F. Command saw already in 1939 that destruction of civilian consumption goods would compel Germany to withdraw materials and labour from war production to fill the gap. Implementation of this part of the R. A. F.'s offensive plans had to wait until the bomber strength was sufficient for a major assault on large centres of German industry. This assault was launched early in 1942 just after Germany had introduced further cuts on civilian production. The result was that the cuts were restored on October 23, 1942, with an emergency programme of 200,000 articles.

Thus it is seen how relentlessly the R. A. F. has followed the master plan laid down in 1939, and the amazing accuracy of this plan to-day is justified by the results achieved. Thus the attack on arms production facilities brought the Ruhr steel output down in 1942 at an annual rate of 1,250,000 tons, and coal at an annual rate of 20,000,000 tons. Transport offensives robbed war factories of key metal workers who were diverted to additional locomotive construction. In civilain production household articles competed with arms for available raw materials. The net result of these R. A. F. victories has been a fall in German arms production as a whole since January, 1942.

The Air Ministry sums up the success of the 1939 plan as follows : "In every sphere the R. A. F. attacks accentuated every unfavourable factor, wearing down workers, destroying plants and stocks, and creating at the same time demands for more labour and material for building and consumer goods. The results achieved by this carefully planned offensive on the German industrial and economic systems are very great. If the attacks are maintained and intensified, the effect may well be catastrophic."

GERMAN AIR FORCE ON THE DOWNGRADE.

By Peter Masefield in the "Sunday Times"

Germany's decision to attack on a localised front in Russia and at the same time to attempt to defend the Mediterranean Islands are acts of desperation in the use of the *Luftwaffe* which must have farreaching effects on the future course of the war. The fact is that Germany's ultimate power of resistance in the face of growing

Allied armed strength depends on the day and night fighter force which the *Luftwaffe* can keep in operation: Just as the fate of Great Britain depended on the R. A. F. fighter Command in 1940/41.

But this time Allied attackers—understanding air power and its versatility as the Germans have never done—are achieving thier objectives and suffering losses far smaller than their production. Furthermore, whereas the enemy's air offensive was never more than army co-operation, the Allied air attack is now achieving both that and a decisive purpose of its own which will be a major factor in the victory whichever way that victory is ultimately achieved.

The Allied air offensive in the west, and land and air battles in Russia and the Mediterranean are having very material influence on that pivotal force of German fighters. Air offensive is a decisive and dominant factor in reducing an enemy's power to make war.

The rate at which the decisive result can be achieved depends firstly, on Allied production, which is very high and is increasing; and secondly, on German air defences of which fighter force is by far the most important component. Without fighters, German anti-aircraft artillery would be much less effective; in fact, it could be rendered a negligible quantity. Conversely, if the German fighter force was of immense proportions—bigger than the enemy can ever hope to attain—then it could stop the Allied bombing and render the air offensive abortive and an invasion impossible.

Hence Germany's present desperate concentration on the production of fighters. But turning over from bombers to smaller types of combat aeroplanes, the numerical output of the Reich can be increased while the tonnage of the aircraft built remains constant or even decreases.

At present the fighter force of the *Luftwaffe* is stretched to the uttermost on three main fronts, in the west, on the Russian front and the Mediterranean. By drawing on dwindling reserves, its firstline strength has been maintained. But the writing is on the wall. The *Luftwaffe* is on the downgrade and nothing the enemy can do can stop its decline.

As the Allied pressure increases on land and in the air, so the reduction of strength of the *Luftwaffe* is accelerated till a cracking point is reached at which the enemy's fighter force is no longer capable either of meeting its losses from production or reserves or of influencing concentration and accuracy of bombing. This results in Allied air offensive and air support will go up with equal sharpness.

Just when that cracking point arrives depends on the combined results of Allied operations on all fronts at once. To all intents and purposes, it will be when German losses from all causes reach about 3,000 aircraft per month.

All the great strength of modern armies is useless unless they have ranged behind and above them a fighter force adequate to ensure air supremacy over the enemy. The fighter strength of the *Luftwaffe* is now declining slowly; reserves are running out and desperate efforts are being made to accelerate production to meet the situation, Gaps in production caused by bombing are such, losses on all fronts are so great and the Allied air power is increasing so remorselessly that the cracking point may not be far off.

JOURNALISM IN THE JUNGLE.

HAZARDOUS TASK OF A MODERN NEWSPAPERMAN.

by

F. R. MORAES.

Here is a well-known story about Gordon Bennett, pioneer of American Journalism in the last century. One day news came of a war between two South American States. Gordon Bennett decided to despatch his ace camera man to the front. Unfortunately the photographer arrived to find no war in progress. So he cabled home; "No war Wire instructions." And back came Gordon Bennett's reply; "Never mind, you supply the pictures. We'll supply the War."

Alas, this halcyon age is no more. Gone are the days when a journalist could languish in idleness reporting an imaginary war in different lands. The modern war correspondent may labour under many hardships, but at least he has a war to report. Even on a small front like Arakan the newspaperman had his moments of excitement, though he also had his hours of boredom.

With all of us journalists who covered this curious front, Arakan will always be associated with the tiny township of Maungdaw. In peacetime it must have been a sleepy, rambling, rather overgrown village. Even whilst the Japanese moved north from Rathedaung towards Buthidaung on the upper reaches of the Mayu river, Maungdaw wore its usual somnolent look. Out in the warm sultry sunshine Arakanese children played while their parents worked at the nearby jetty or watered the dusty roads.

MAUNGDAW MADHOUSE.

"It is the back door to Burma," said an Indian doctor who had shuttled in and out of Maungdaw during the vicissitudes of the past few months.

"Looks more like a backwater," growled a testy war correspondent. A stone's throw from the Naf river was a collection of untidy wood and bamboo structures. In one of these, with officers going to and from the front, were housed the war correspondents. One correspondent, an individualist. Two correspondents, a controversy. Three correspondents, a babel. Small wonder that the Press camp was christened the Maungdaw Madhouse.

The click and rattle of typewriters could be heard throughout the day. Nightfall brought the more companionable clink of glasses. Presiding over this oddly assorted company of individualists was an officer, who, in the palmy days of peace, was associated with the stage. When spirits were low (in more senses than one!) and tempers a little frayed this resourceful Good Companion could be relied on to put over an act. He was a superb mimic with a devastating turn of phrase. Assisting him at these improvised revels was a former revue producer with an inexhaustible fund of stories and an inimitable patter. They were worth their weight in good Scotch.

Maungdaw, like other places near the front, had an air raid siren which went on and off in the most unexpected fashion. It could be as temperamental as a prima donna. Sometimes as cantankerous. I remember one moonlit night—a favourite time for Japanese bombers—when the siren wailed incessantly while a plane droned overhead. Perhaps we were tired. Perhaps we had grown a bit blasé. I doubt if more than one or two among us made for the slit trenches outside.

But truth compels the admission that one remained in bed feeling vaguely uneasy, listening to the drone of the plane overhead. Nothing happened on that particular night and subsequent inquiry revealed that it was one of our own bombers back from a bombing raid and a little uncertain as to its whereabouts.

LIFE IN CHINA'S WARTIME CAPITAL.

by

MARTIN MOORE.

(*From the* ***Daily Telegraph***).

CHUNGKING is the gayest and the gloomiest place I have ever visited. Gaiety is in the faces and bearing of the people. Gloom is in the grim, grey, shattered city, a ruined slum rising on steep cliffs above the confluence of two muddy rivers.

Europe can show no devastation to compare with what Chungking had seen. Coventry and Rotterdam have had more savage raids, but no city has suffered such continuous punishment as China's wartime capital. It has been destroyed piecemeal, not once but several times.

One of its raid alarms lasted continuously, day and night, for two weeks, during which the " All-Clear " was never sounded.

BUILDINGS REBUILT.

Some of its buildings have been destroyed and rebuilt four and five times. Because of the likelihood that there will have to be more reconstruction they have not been re-erected with any idea of permanence.

Such brick buildings as remained repairable have almost all been taken over by military and Government bodies. The better dwelling-houses are of mud and bamboo, roofed with thatch. Tens of thousands of people are living in homes that are patchwork of salvaged timber and matting.

Every strip of vacant ground is cultivated in the scrupulous Chinese way. These green crops and the mounds of tangerines in the fruiterers' shops and the flags and banners hanging in the streets are the only splashes of colour in grey Chungking.

There are 4,20,000 people living in the central area of the capital. All of them dress in black or blue or brown, and your first impression is that everybody not in uniform is engaged in selling something. Every street is lined with shops so small that there are 20 or 30 of them in a hundred yards. Hawkers, moreover, squat beside their trays on the pathway.

The shops are open-fronted booths in which domestic life proceeds as a background to commerce. At whatever time you pass there is always a meal in the dark recesses of the shop. Shutters are put up so late at night and taken down so early in the morning that the city seems perpetually awake.

Chungking is a difficult city to get about in. The streets were shattered with the houses, and though main thoroughfares have been repaved, many are only tracks of trodden earth which turns to ankle-deep mud after a shower.

The infrequent motor-buses, running on vegetable oil, are yet frequent enough to keep the windless air constantly heavy with the sickly odour of their exhaust. There are no trams and no taxis. The few cars to be seen belong to Government officials or foreign diplomates.

Most people walk. The alternative is some aged rickshaw, its parts tied together with bits of string and wire. Rickshaws are expensive, and a few fares a day enable a coolie to earn as much as a university professor. Many of Chungking's roads are too steep for a rickshaw and the conveyance is a litter, carried by two coolies.

The most remarkable feature of the Chinese capital is its famous system of air raid shelters. The hillsides are honeycombed with tunnels, which can accommodate the entire population.

TUNNEL-SHELTERS.

The head of the A. R. P. organization showed me round one of the largest of these dugouts where 6,000 people can sit in perfect safety with 100 feet of solid rock between them and the Japanese bombs. The cave has three entrances as well as a ventilating shaft, through which electric fans draw fresh air. Every resident in the locality has his appointed place in the tunnel and there is a special section for passers-by or strangers.

A long-range warning system gives people several hours' notice of impending attack so there is no excuse for anyone not to go to his proper place in his own shelter.

While there are half a dozen of these huge shelters the later policy has been to dig smaller caves accommodating 500 people. Even the smallest has two entrances, because in the early raids on Chungking debris often blocked the doors and people were imprisoned until a way could be dug through. Apart from these public shelters most offices and Government departments have their own dugouts. Altogether there are about 700 tunnelled into the hillside.

Like London, Chungking has had a long respite. Thanks to the growing Allied fighter strength in China, a raiding force would now almost certainly be destroyed or turned back before it could reach the capital. The enemy is too much occupied elsewhere to make the attempt.

The mist which descends on the sunbaked city at the end of September is its surest protection. People know that the pall will scarcely lift before May and that until then they are safe from raiders. But though danger is not imminent and may never come

again, the A. R. P., organization, with its 20,000 volunteers, is kept in a state of constant readiness. At an hour's notice bakeries can be turned on to produce millions of special "iron ration" cakes in case the city's population should be confined for days on end in the shelters.

When you leave the capital and go out into the country districts you realize how thoroughly China is being mobilized. Everywhere small detachments of soldiers are on the march. In 700 miles' driving I was hardly ever out of sight of soldiery.

ENORMOUS MANPOWER.

Military lorries are almost the only mechanical transport to be met with, but they are not enough to satisfy the needs of the armies. Great quantities of supplies have to be moved hundreds of miles by manpower—carried in handcarts, each pulled by half a dozen Labour Corps coolies.

China claims to have an army of 1,00,00,000 men. Not all of them are under arms, because there are not enough weapons for all. Foreign observers estimate that the immediate effective strength is between 20,00,000 and 30,00,000. But the country's potential manpower if the arms were available, is enormous.

Every man between 18 and 45 is liable for military training. From the reservoir of trained men the actual call-up is by lot. A district is ordered, for example, to send 1,000 men to the army, and the luck of the draw decides who is to go. Even under the urgency of war China's immemorial cult of the family is respected. Every man is entitled to perpetuate his line, so an only son is never called to the colours.

Almost everything seems against happiness in China, a long war, uncertainty about what will happen afterwards, the nearness to the bone of daily life now, high prices, high taxes and the shortage of almost all manufactured goods. Yet China is cheerful. Never anywhere have I seen so many faces in which laughter was the habitual expression.

In the main street of Chungking one day I saw a man riding a bicycle—a rare treasure he was lucky to possess. He ran over a brick and the bicycle frame snapped in two. In a country where a second-hand bicycle costs the equivalent of £ 50 to £ 100 this was more than misfortune. It was a tragedy. Yet the gathering crowd laughed—and no one laughed more heartily than the victim as he picked himself up out of the mud.

That scene seemed to typify China. Devastation and want and war hang over her like Chungking's unlifting cloud, but underneath she is smiling.

"INDIA IS DRYING UP UNDER OUR EYES."

SOIL EROSION THREAT AND ITS REMEDY.

COLONEL BRAYNE'S WARNING

(July 26.)

"India is literally drying up in front of our eyes and yet how many of us know it or recognise erosion when we see it?" observed Colonel F. L. Brayne, M. C., C. S. I.

C. I. E., in an A. I. R., talk reproduced in Bulletin No. 39 of the Central Board of Irrigation. "A friend described a certain hilly district in North India as perfect and yet the truth was that that district was getting poorer every year from erosion, trees and grass were steadily decreasing and more than half the people were underfed. Another friend, travelling through a part of India, said that it looked like what the mountains of the moon must be like."

Colonel Brayne continued: Some years ago my eyes were opened to the creeping death of erosion and since then I have studied it very carefully with the help of the experts of the Punjab Forest Department, and I am appalled at the extent of the erosion going on all over India, at the way the soil and vegetation is disappearing. North and South it is the same. You see the lovely forests in places, but they just mark the contrast between what it is and what could be.

God did not make bare hills. He clothed them with trees and bushes. It is man's carelessness that has stripped the hills and allowed the wind and the rain to remove the precious soil which may take ages to replace. The hills, grazing grounds and fields are alike eroding. In many areas the rainfall is decreasing and the subsoil water is receding. There is a connection between rainfall and vegetation, and although we cannot prove that the loss of trees causes the rainfall to decrease, it is quite obvious that it must be more difficult for rain clouds to precipitate rain on to a hot, dry desert than on to a cool forest.

It is said that God never made a desert. That is probably true. Deserts probably are man-made, but once man has stripped the trees off a large enough area for the wind to operate with full force, the uncontrolled forces of nature may take charge and expand the desert. The American dust bowl is ample warning to us that deserts are not all pre-historic. They are being made to-day by the carelessness of man.

How is the carelessness of man making deserts and drying up India to-day? The Indian weather usually consists of short sharp rain-storms and long periods of drought when the soil becomes very dry and powdery. The result is that bursts of heavy rain wash soil away from all unlevelled land unless it is permanently covered with a mat of vegetation. Arable land can only be covered with thick crops for short periods and therefore all unlevelled land should be levelled before it is cultivated. Vast areas of arable land in India have not yet been levelled and instead of steadily gaining are steadily losing soil and fertility. The first principle of Indian farming therefore is that all sloping land must be terraced with, where necessary, drains to remove surplus water. Terracing is well understood in some parts, but most of India is sadly in need of terracing and is steadily deteriorating.

On the hills and pastures the growing period of grass is very short. Unless therefore grazing and browsing are very strictly limited and under complete control, they just destroy the vegetation. The vegetable covering is stripped from the soil, while the sharp hooves of the animals break up the surface for wind and rain to remove. In this way hills and pastures are destroyed and India is being rapidly desiccated.

The cure for erosion is fortunately equally simple and in this warm climate almost miraculously rapid. Close the hills and pastures to grazing, tie up livestock in stalls and feed them with cut grass fodder crops. Seedling trees will at once sprout and the grass will improve and multiply. Stalled milkers will give far more milk than wandering grazers, and once people cut grass and grow fodder crops they will be careful to breed.

only from the best. In the climate of India grazing and browsing is as fatal to natural vegetation as it would be to growing crops. Any one can prove this by walling or wiring in any typical plot of hillside where erosion has not completely destroyed the soil.

The terracing of fields also brings an immediate increase of crops both by increasing the moisture in the soil and conserving the precious top soil and fertilising salts previously washed away by rain. Every year billions of tons of top soil are washed away never to come back, and top soil which one shower will wash away may take a hundred years to replace. The quicker we tackle the problem the sooner shall we increase the fertility of India's fields, restore grass and trees to her pastures and hills and increase the food supply.

The destiny of India is not in the hands of politicians. It is in the hooves and the teeth of India's innumerable cattle, sheep and goats, and iiutil we control them they will continue to dry up India until we all perish together and India becomes a second Sahara or another Gobi desert.

PUDUKKOTTAI STATE NATIONAL WAR FRONT BUREAU.

PROGRAMME.

LECTURE CLVII. (*Batch 2*).

31- 7-43	Municipal Office	... 6.00 p.m.	4- 8-43	College A English	... 10.45 a.m.
1- 8-43	Nirpalani	... 7.00 ,,	,,	College B Tamil	... 10.45 ,,
,,	Avoor	... 7.30 ,,	,,	Nartamalai	... 7.00 p.m.
2- 8-43	Karaiyur	... 7.00 ,,	,,	Uppiliakkudi	... 7.30 ,,
,,	Idaiyattur	... 7.30 ,,	5- 8-43	Andakkulam	... 7.00 ,,
3- 8-43	Vadavalam	... 7.00 ,,	,,	Killanur	... 7.30 ,,
,,	Sammattividuthi	... 7.30 ,,	6- 8-43	Kodumbalur	... 7.00 ,,
4- 8-43	C. S. M. High School	... 10.00 a.m.	,,	Viralur	... 7.30 ,,
,,	Rani's High School	... 10.45 ,,			

LECTURE CLVIII (*Batch 3*).

7- 8-43	Municipal Office	... 6.00 p.m.	11- 8-43	College A English	... 10.45 a.m.
8- 8-43	Alangudi	... 7.00 ,,	,,	College B Tamil	... 10.45 ,,
,,	Rasiamangalam.	7.30 ,,	,,	P. Puduppatti	... 7.00 p.m.
9- 8-43	Tirumayyam	... 7.00 ,,	,,	Vendampatti	... 7.30 ,,
,,	Melur	... 7.30 ,,	12- 8-43	Vellanur	... 7.00 ,,
10- 8-43	Pallivasal	... 7.00 ,,	,,	Sembattur	... 7.30 ,,
,,	Pillamangalam.	... 7.30 ,,	13- 8-43	Puliyur	... 7.00 ,,
11- 8-43	C. S. M. High School	... 10.00 a.m.	,,	Kannangudi	... 7.30 ,,
,,	Rani's High School	... 10.45 ,,			

RECRUITING—ADVERTISEMENT—4 p. m.

31—7—43	Ponnamaravathi.	7—8—43	Tirumayyam.
1—8—43	Embal.	8—8—43	Kodumbalur.
2—8—43	Kiranur.	9—8—43	Viralimalai.
3—8—43	Konapattu.	10—8—43	Ramachandrapuram.
4—8—43	Rayavaram.	11—8—43	Kilanilai-Puduppatti.
5—8—43	Alangudi.	12—8—43	Kulipirai.
6—8—43	Pudukkottai.	13—8—43	Pudukkottai.

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